

Christian Courier

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Inuit take historic step towards autonomy

Bill Fledderus

IQALUIT, N.W.T. — The month of November 1992 may go down in Canadian history as a time when the Inuit of the eastern Arctic took control of their own future. On Nov. 3-5 they voted 69 percent in favour of a land claim settlement, and around the same time they signed a political accord with the government to establish a new,

almost exclusively Inuit, territory.

The land claim deal still needs to be approved by Parliament next summer, while the new territory, consisting of the eastern part of the Northwest Territories, will be phased in by 1999 and be called Nunavut.

These developments are a positive step towards the restoration of pride and positive self image among Inuit, say



Photo: Inuit Tapiriat of Canada

Inuit children face an exciting and challenging future

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Peter Bishop, the executive archdeacon of the Diocese of the Arctic, and other leaders of the Anglican Church, the church to which 90 percent of Inuit belong. (See related article on page 9).

"For the Inuit to take ownership of their own government could have a profound influence on their future," says Harold Fehderau, director of Scripture translation at the Canadian Bible Society. Fehderau is very familiar with the Inuit, as he has just supervised a new translation of the New Testament into Inuktitut (see CC, Nov. 20).

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DEC. 03 1992

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Thinkbit

According to a Jewish rabbi, one of the questions God will ask us some day is: "Did you take advantage of the permissible pleasures of life?"

From: CBC program "Open House"

Not enough Christians are breaking up church roofs, says disabilities director



Photo: Bert Witvoet

James Vanderlaan (r.) and Bert Zwiers as they leave the Christian Courier office.

Bert Witvoet

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — "People are generally afraid of getting into the space of disabled people," says James Vanderlaan during a visit to the editorial department of *Christian Courier*. Dr. Vanderlaan is the new director of the Committee on Disability Concerns of the Christian Reformed Church (CRC).

He points out that as a result of other people's fears and discomforts, disabled people get a double whammy as they endure loneliness in addition to the challenges that their handicap brings.

Vanderlaan wonders why it is that only one in five disabled people in the United States attends church while the national average for abled people is one in two. In Canada the percentage of abled people attending church on a regular basis stands at 23, according to a study by Reginald Bibby and Don Posterski.

Act like four friends

But Vanderlaan is not pleading for sympathy. He is asking Christians to be helpful. He recently explained some of his thoughts in a sermon on the healing of the paralytic man (Luke 5). The man lowered through the roof is a

representative of all disabled persons, he says.

What that man needed to hear was not "Be healed" but "Your sins are forgiven," says Vanderlaan. It is the task of the church to act like the four friends who lowered him through the roof and make it easy for disabled people to hear the message of forgiveness.

From Vanderlaan's sermon one may conclude that either too many people are standing between Jesus and the disabled or not enough people are breaking up roofs.

Minimized his disability

One might think that to become the director of the Committee on Disability Concerns would have been an obvious desire for Vanderlaan. Being a blind person would automatically draw him to the work of enhancing the acceptance by churches of disabled persons.

Not so, says Vanderlaan. For the greater part of his life he tried not to focus on his blindness. "Thanks in part to the attitude of my parents I did not think of myself as a disabled person," he says.

See A TIME — p. 2 ...

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News/Politics

A time to concentrate on his disability

...continued from p. 1

The worst part of Vanderlaan's childhood was going to a school for the blind. He vividly remembers his relief when he was finally allowed to attend a "normal" school beginning with junior high school. "My whole approach was to minimize my blindness," he says. "I didn't like to spend any more time with other handicapped people than would any other person."

A new focus

Vanderlaan was drawn to his new position by a number of circumstances in which he saw the hand of God and through which he heard God saying to him, "You've had enough of minimizing your disability. I want you to concentrate on it."

Vanderlaan, who served as pastor in three Christian Reformed churches and taught a few years at Calvin College and Calvin Seminary in Grand Rapids, Mich., made his career change after experiencing trouble in his last congregation. He got out of the parish ministry at a time when, according to his own testimony, he was too old to be interesting to other churches, (in addition to being blind and expensive) and too young to retire.

Ambitious program

The first few months of his directorship Vanderlaan has spent orienting himself, getting the first newsletter out, learning a new word processing pro-

gram and sending out letters to deacons and pastors. He hopes to do a lot of speaking and preaching.

But Vanderlaan has assigned himself a few long-term projects as well.

As someone who completed his master's and doctoral studies in ethics at Princeton University he is well qualified to develop a theology of disability ministry, wrestling with such questions as "How does the reality of living or dealing with a disability connect with your understanding of who God is?" He wants to write a Bible study course that focuses on disabilities.

Good legislation

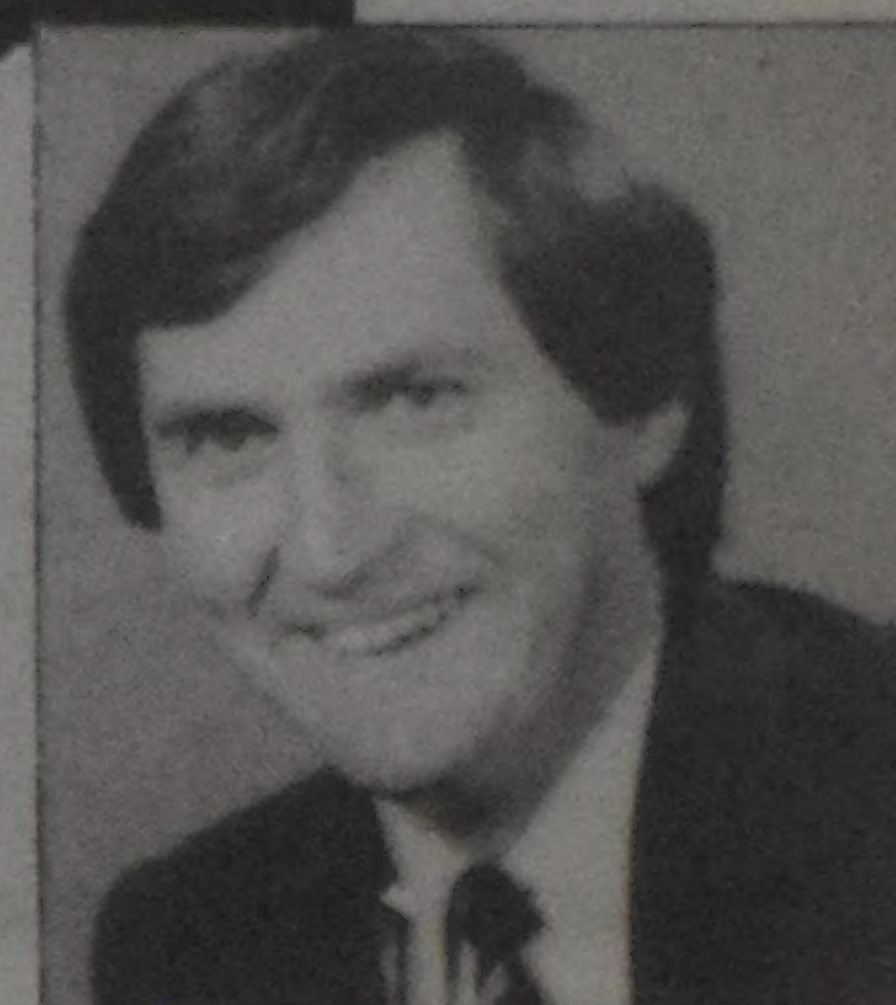
One important project lying ahead will be an overture to the 1993 synod of the Christian Reformed Church in which churches will be asked to voluntarily implement recommendations of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA asks that people with disabilities be afforded equal opportunity and access to education, employment, travel, communication and all public accommodations.

According to Bert Zwiers, who accompanied Vanderlaan and who is chair of the Committee on Disability Concerns, the ADA is an excellent piece of legislation that can be easily transplanted to Canadian soil.

There are at least 50,000 people in the Christian Reformed Church with some

kind of disability, says Vanderlaan. How can a three-person team (director, program director and secretary) serve all of them? Only if the churches themselves get involved, says Vanderlaan.

He counsels people not to be afraid to take the initiative and to ask, "Will this help? Is this useful?" Disabled people don't want sympathy, only empathy, adds Zwiers.



Paul Marshall

Darkness in Nagorno-Karabakh

The demise of the former Soviet Union has produced a nightmare for anyone interested in following world politics. A host of new names has invaded our consciousness: Uzbekistan, South Ossetia, Nagorno-Karabakh, to name a few. Most of us had never heard of these a few years ago; few of us now know where they are.

We have the vague fear that bad things are going on in these places but we no longer hear much about them. The news media seem to share our ignorance and lack of concern.

However, in certain instances this ignorance is not just regrettable but tragic. This is especially so for Christians because in many of these areas there are not only wars and ethnic conflict to rival anything going on in the tortured remnants of the former Yugoslavia, but there are also scenes of the most terrible persecution of the church.

Unimaginable suffering

The Armenians have suffered as have few others even in this suffering world. Over a million were killed by the Turks in 1915, something which the Turkish government still refuses to admit. Thereafter they suffered under the depredations of communism for 70 years. In 1988 they were subjected to a devastating earthquake, made worse by a blockade imposed by Azerbaijan. Now the population of Nagorno-Karabakh is under siege and attack from the surrounding Azeris.

Baroness Cox, the deputy speaker of the House of Lords in the U.K., went to Nagorno-Karabakh in 1991 on behalf of the Andre Sakharov Memorial Congress, the first time a human rights organization had become involved. Since then she has returned nine times, often at the risk of her life. Her reports make grim reading.

Nagorno-Karabakh is under siege. Azerbaijan has cut off electricity, water, food and medicine. People have died of exposure and

starvation. Major surgery is being done without benefit of anaesthetic.

Systematic bombardment

The area is also under military attack. Azeri troops have sought to overrun it, subjecting the population to a battle zone. Successful Azeri attacks have been followed by demolition of houses and churches, by massacre, rape, brutal torture and mutilation. The details and the photographs hardly bear publication.

In recent months Azeri forces have started to systematically bombard civilian areas with GRAD multiple-missile rocket launchers. These level towns and villages. In one day, Baroness Cox counted 400 rockets landing on the capital of Stepanakert. These have caused thousands of deaths, often of children.

About the only agency which is trying to provide some aid is Christian Solidarity International, which is trying to fly in relief supplies. But its planes are being fired upon.

Find out what you can do

Our governments are doing nothing, and many are seeking trade contracts with the Azeris, who have oil. The public at large, including the Christian public, has so far done little.

I would urge you to find out as much as you can about Nagorno-Karabakh, and support the work of Christian Solidarity International. Contact Christian and other relief agencies to find out what they have done or can do, and press your M.P. or Congresspersons and other government officials to find out what they know and what they will commit themselves to do.

Failure to do so may make us bystanders to very literal genocide.

Paul Marshall is senior member in political theory at the Institute for Christian Studies, Toronto.

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Comment

Pressreview

Carl D. Tuyl



Pressreview

Manitoba's residents could up till now gamble but not shop on Sundays. This is about to be changed as stores will be allowed to open on Sundays from 12 noon till 6 p.m.

There are all kinds of exciting things happening in that province. Manitoba's minister of health is getting into an assertive mood. He issued a memo in which he ordered all the province's hospitals to seek his permission before purchasing a CAT-scan machine. And the Lord's prayer is making a re-appearance in many Manitoba public schools.

★ ★ ★

People in Victoria voted to continue to pump their raw sewage straight into the ocean. And I always thought that Victoria was the most civilized city in our country! After all, where else than in Victoria's Empress Hotel can you observe the high British tea ceremony? Life is full of disappointments.

★ ★ ★

Before we complain too much, though, consider this sign above the cash register of a bakery in Estonia: "One loaf per customer!" Makes you swallow some of those beefs, eh?

★ ★ ★

This is cash crunch time. Churches, municipalities, hospitals, school boards — the whole country is scraping the bottom of the buck barrel.

Defence minister Marcel Masse even hints that Canada may have to terminate some of its peacekeeping responsibilities. Monsieur wants to terminate some cabinet ministers, but he doesn't want to do it before Christmas. Mighty nice of him.

★ ★ ★

The feds turned the squeaky money pump a few more cranks and came up with \$50 million for Canadian Airlines. It looked a bit like throwing water at a drowning man, but there's a lot of votes in them there western provinces. They had to do something.

★ ★ ★

Chretien just walked into a Toronto riding and brazenly appointed his own favourite follower as the riding candidate for the next election. There is apparently an obscure party regulation that allows him to do that. Chretien promised to make more use of that privilege. Now he is no longer numero uno in the hearts of some Liberals, especially not in the heart of Nunziata, who was unceremoniously fired from Chretien's shadow cabinet for speaking up.

What surprises me is that we haven't heard from Sheila Copps on the matter. All powder-puffed and dolly-dimpled she primly stands above the fracas like a mother superior not wanting to interfere in the squabble between some novice nuns. She is probably giving Numero Uno enough rope to hang himself.

★ ★ ★

As of last week the Boy Scouts ceased to exist. They have gone co-ed and are now Person Scouts.

★ ★ ★

The Auditor-General stirred the soup with his first report to parliament. It was a Holiday Inn report: no surprises. The government's grip on spending is as fragile as a spider's web in a hurricane.

★ ★ ★

And here is my thought of the week: "Let us not forget that in the order of creation we

came after the beasts of the earth and after everything that creeps on the ground." And for people who think we're running out of room in Canada I have this bit of information: 89 percent of Canadian land has no permanent settlement.

★ ★ ★

French farmers were acting like men whose trousers are on fire. They ran amok in the streets of Paris, throwing metal racks and fire crackers at police. *Quelle épouvante!* Their subsidies are threatened by the GATT agreement.

★ ★ ★

And here's an example of German decisiveness: "Faced with the slothful and disgraceful inability of Latvian authorities to provide my embassy with water," so spoke Count Lombsdorff in Riga. "I close the mission until further notice." Deutschland, Deutschland uber alles.

Things must be pretty bad in Riga. The *Baltic Independent* reports that Lada owners chain their cars to steel fixings in the city's streets. Can you imagine stealing a Lada? I know people who would pay money to have someone take their Lada jalopy off their hands.

★ ★ ★

And this is a cute one: the supply of Russian natural gas to Germany and France was roughly halved last month. The shortfall was attributed to the pirating of gas out of the transit line by Ukraine.

★ ★ ★

At the U.N. a Cuban representative begged the member nations to back his motion that urges the cessation of a U.S. trade embargo against his country. Cuba's economy is in dire straits ever since aid from the Soviet Union no longer reaches Castro's island.

★ ★ ★

Convicts on death row in Utah can choose the manner of their execution: will that be shooting or hanging? In Idaho the choice is between lethal injection and the firing

squad. Other American states which have the death penalty offer no choice.

Of the 2,086 executions that Amnesty International registered in 1991, 1,859 took place in two countries: China and Iran. There are 2,588 people on death row in America's prisons.

★ ★ ★

That's it for this week. Here's my bit of wisdom:

Think what a wonderful world it would be if we followed even half of the advice we gave to others. Be nice to each other.

Carl Tuyl is a member of the Ontario Provincial Interfaith Committee on Chaplaincy and chaplaincy coordinator for the Christian Reformed Church.

Amsterdam

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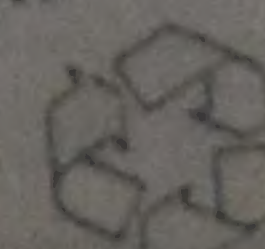
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Editorial

If only Superman would revert to Clark Kent

Superman is dead. The seemingly immortal being from the planet Krypton has expired. The unexpected fictional death was made necessary by slumping sales of Superman comic books. The three million copies of *Superman N. 750* are expected to give DC Comics a final surge of revenues, and then it's over for the phone booth hero normally disguised as Clark Kent.

Or is it? One Toronto bookstore owner thinks Superman will be reincarnated, but this time as a meaner hero... "in keeping with the times, you know." These are not the times apparently for selling a hero who represents unadulterated good.

Another man like him

The whole thing makes me smile a bit when I think of the song by the Crash Test Dummies:

*Superman never made any money,
saving the world from Solomon Grundy,
sometimes I despair the world
will never see another man like him.*

The irony operates at different levels here. Superman may not have made any money but DC Comics is going to even if it means killing their 54-year-old character and making room for the likes of Solomon Grundy.

One could also say that there's no reason to despair even if the world will never see another man like Superman again. The problem of evil and crime just cannot be solved by having a lowly journalist enter a phone booth and come out flying with hard muscles pressing against a blue suit with a red-on-yellow S and a red cape flying in the wind. I have tried it, but the muscles just wouldn't bulge.

Life is so prudential

I suppose one could even make a case for a meaner version of Superman and say that it conforms a little more to reality... except that kids will be asked to identify with a hero who doesn't mind hating a few people here and there and blasting them to kingdom come. I can't imagine that the newer version will not be more violent... "in keeping with the times."

It appears, though, that Superman's fictional death is kept alive a little longer than expected in the world of commerce. The Prudential Life Insurance Company of America has been cashing in on the latest upswing of interest in

the comic-strip hero by running one-page ads that use Superman's death as a gentle reminder that people should prepare for their own inevitable death.

Could this be a tip for preachers? Why not use Superman's death to remind their listeners that LIFE is short and that it would be PRUDENT to ENSURE that people join the COMPANY of the saints.

The non-superman

The final irony can be found in the fact that comic book presentations of the ultimate non-superman, Jesus of Nazareth, are being widely distributed in Russia. (Come to think of it, Clark Kent has more in common with Jesus than Superman.) Don't you think it's ironic that a country that lost the Cold War against the West may well be on the way to winning the war of the soul?

Many Russians are quite aware that no Superman can save them in their grim existence and are turning to the story of the Gospel. They are flipping illustrated pages that tell of a man of sorrows who is acquainted with grief.

The whole phenomenon of Superman, from Nietzsche to Neo-Nazis, has been a parable of a world turned upside down — an example of how proud human beings prefer the strong things of the world, unlike those who know they are stuck and cling to a God who chooses the weak things of the world to shame the strong.

BW

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- expresses opinions that are infused by Scripture and Spirit and rooted in a Reformed perspective,
- provides opportunities for contact and discussion for the Christian community.

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Buthelezi had a hard time in Canada

One has to feel for Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, head of the Inkatha Freedom Party in South Africa. Here he has for years been advocating a non-violent overthrow of apartheid, while Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress were practising violence, yet in the eyes of Canadian reporters and politicians Buthelezi is the terrorist and Mandela the peace-loving saviour of oppressed blacks in South Africa.

The *Toronto Star* went so far as to offer a dart to Prime Minister Brian Mulroney for "coddling a notorious warmonger," namely the head of the Inkatha Party, which, says the paper, "has been linked to brutality in South Africa's black townships."

Without saying that Buthelezi is sparkling clean when it comes to the present power struggle going on between Inkatha and the ANC, any person who knows anything about

South Africa knows that *everyone* has been linked to brutality in South Africa's black townships: the South African military and police, the extreme right wing and left wing groups, the ANC as well as Inkatha. Why single out Buthelezi and Inkatha?

Buthelezi has continually pointed out that he does not approve of any violence used by members of his party or by anyone else. He refers to himself as a Christian who does not believe in practising hate.

Judging by the somewhat defensive attitude displayed by the chief, he is not always able to put that Christianity into practice. But one has to understand that it is not easy to keep your cool these days, when all kinds of unfounded charges are leveled against you and ignorant reporters take their cues from the politically correct agenda successfully foisted on a liberal press by the ANC.

BW

Letters

Wrong to be positive about Muslims

Since I was planning to let my subscription lapse at the end of the year, you made it easy for me with your front-page news about a mosque. Muslims are at war with Christianity in many parts of the world. And you feel it necessary to write a contribution full of admiration for them? It seems to me that you feel attracted to Islam.

Mosques are appearing in many Western countries. Even Holland has gotten its share of these, which bring a foreign culture besides a religion.

Sooner or later, with much lobbying and murmurs about discrimination, they will install their usual four loudspeakers, north, south, west and east. And from there on the poor people in Maple will be enjoying (!

the morning prayers at about 5 a.m. These sound very monotonous.

And it won't be long or we will be tripping over them on the way to the subway station when they kneel there with their bums in the air!

You should ask the Jews what they think about Muslims. We are tolerating each other to death!

William A. Thyse,
Thorild, Alta.

Response:

It's not Islam I feel attracted to; it's human beings, whether they be Christ believers or not. Your letter, Sir, shows a lot of disrespect for people who are different from you.

Editor

The woman Wisdom does not call out in some mosques

Your editorial on the Ahmadiyya Movement (C.C. Nov. 6) does not conform to the record of Scripture.

We read in 1 John 2:22 — "Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ. This is the anti-Christ, he who denies the Father and the Son." According to this description, the Khalifa is a liar and an anti-Christ. He has not been given true wisdom. Of what value is his "wisdom"? "God has made foolish the wisdom of the world" (1 Cor. 1:18).

Your editorial implies that we can learn spiritual lessons from the worldly wisdom of an unbeliever, in fact, an anti-Christ. We read in 1 Cor. 2:14 — "The

unspiritual man does not receive the gifts of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned." The Khalifa knows nothing of "the fear of the Lord."

Let us be discerning. Let us also not erase God-given boundaries. Remember Psalm 1 — "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel [wisdom] of the ungodly...but his delight is in the law of the Lord."

Judith Vellinga,
Aylmer, Ont.

Response:

To the extent that the Khalifa denies

Has Redeemer been cheated out of coverage?

Greetings from Redeemer College as well as our sincere wish and prayer that you and your staff may have a blessed Christmas and New Year. On behalf of Redeemer College I want to say thank you for your support of our mission: "Thank you."

Over the years and especially those tough beginning years, *Calvinist Contact* was a vital support to Redeemer College and really helped make us known in our support community. But I

believe I can be frank with you and indicate my disappointment in your decision not to cover our 10th anniversary.

From your perspective, as it was conveyed to me, a 10th anniversary is not a major achievement. Maybe not. However, the local secular press (*Ancaster News Journal* and *Hamilton Spectator*) did not think so and gave us unexpected major coverage.

I appreciated the coverage you gave the 25th anniversary of the Institute for Christian Studies and recently their current fundraising campaign process (Nov. 13, last page). On another occasion you and I did talk about the importance of keeping a balance: making sure that Redeemer College or any other institution does not get an inordinate share of publicity. I indicated that I appreciated your concerns about balance and attribute that to good editorship. But I am left wondering if that balance has been violated.

Rick DeGraaf,
Community Relations Director,
Redeemer College,
Ancaster Ont.

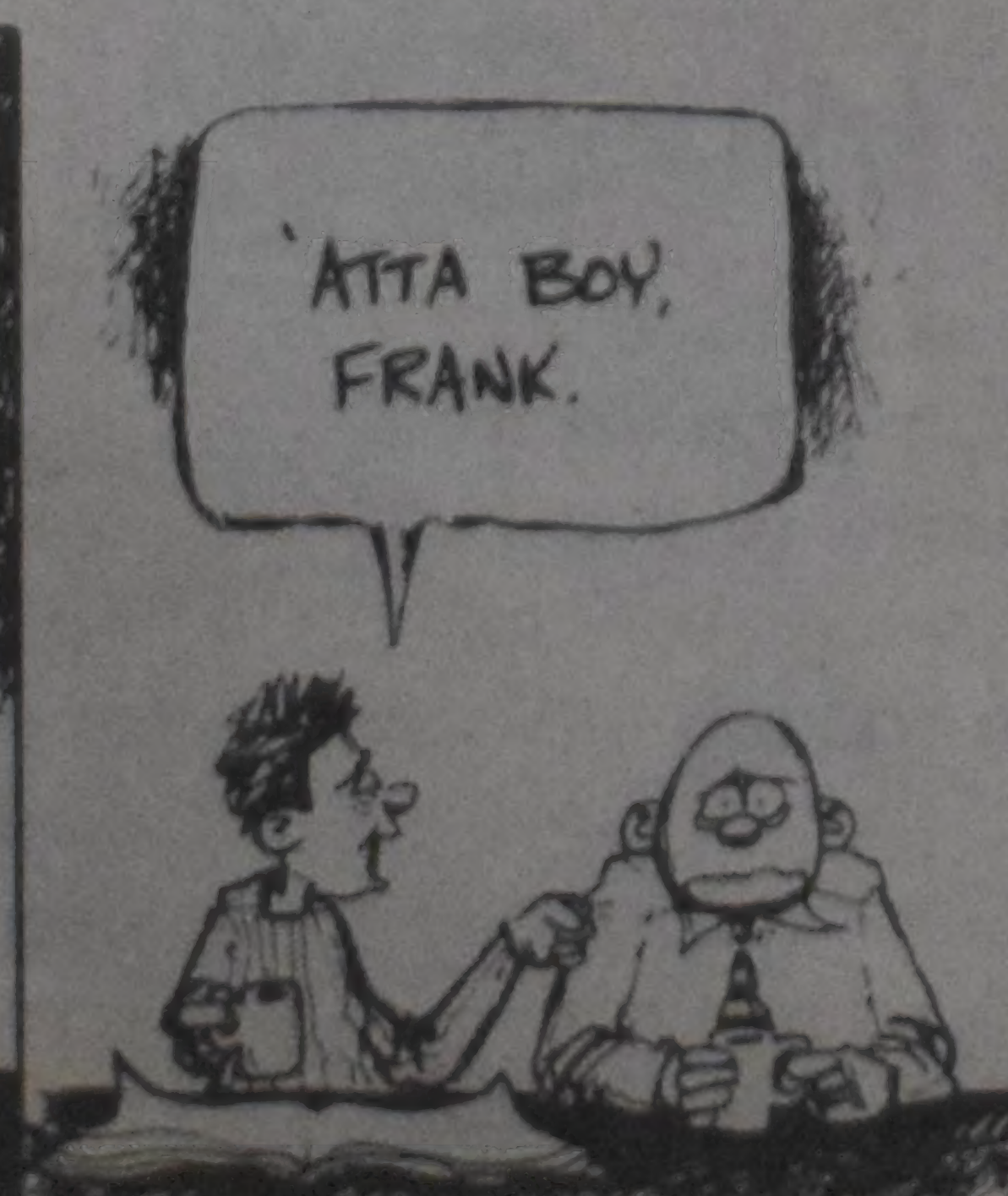
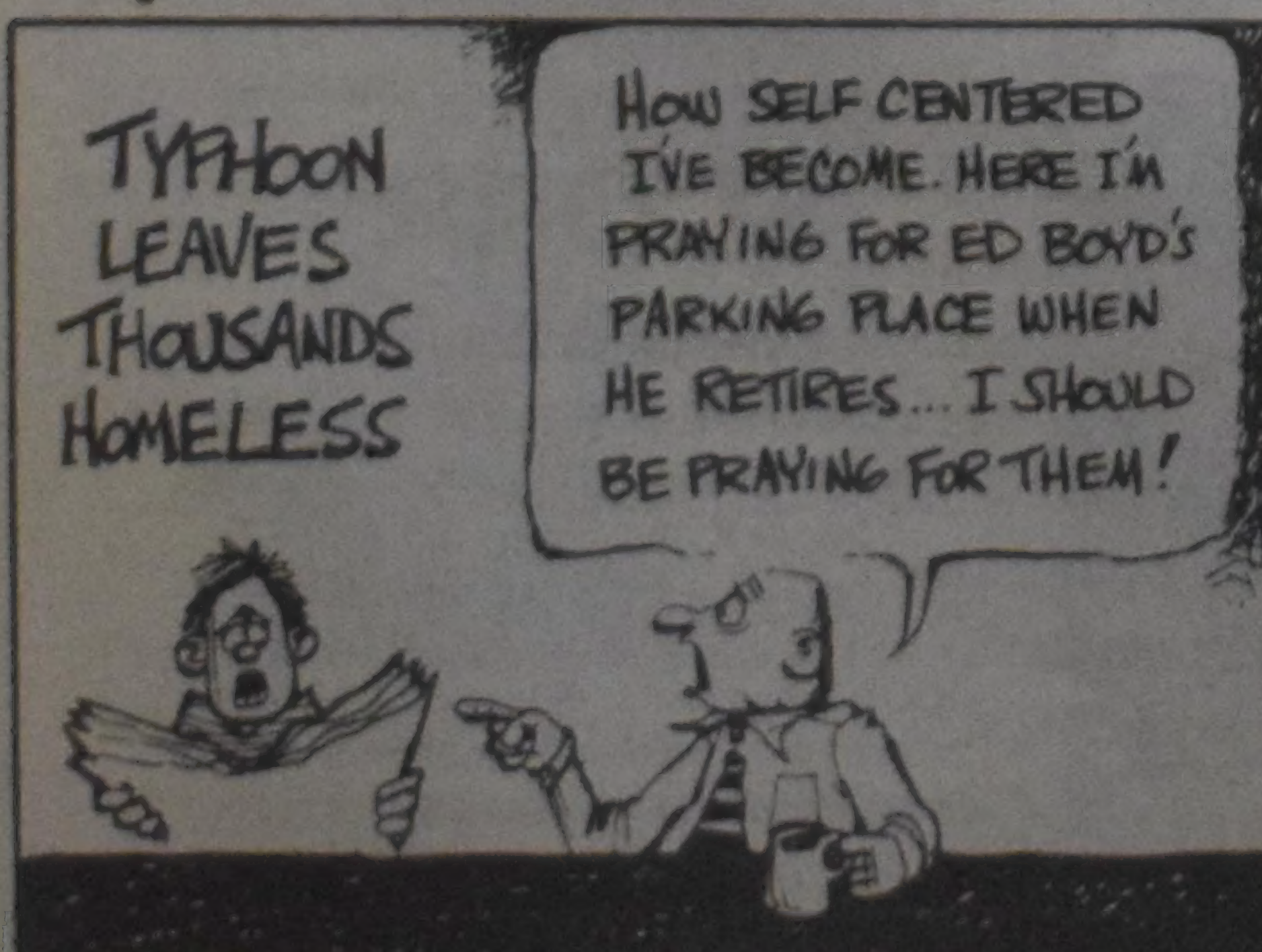
Response:

No one here said anything about 10th anniversaries not being a major achievement. It's just that we do not cover them in our paper, unless there is a special news value connected with them.

Editor

Editor

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Letter

Theology as science an insidious master

Once again we are treated to some of the careful but limited scholarship of Al Wolters in his "Bible Notebook" column in the November 6 issue of *Christian Courier*.

I say "treated" because I respect Al's brilliant and fearless theoretical work and the great scope of his learning. I say "limited" because, while his work has undoubted scientific merit, it can only fulfil a supportive role in biblical interpretation. It would be inappropriate, therefore, to conclude that his historical-grammatical critique could solve the gender issues of holy

Scripture. The living Word of God cannot be captured by any particular combination of theological disciplines.

Scientism with its "tyranny of tools" approach to grasping truth is still flourishing in our Christian circles. I pray that Al's work will not add fodder to that understanding of theology. Theology as a science is a necessary servant but a very insidious and treacherous master.

My (I hope) biblical understanding of gender roles, therefore, certainly does not hinge on the interesting work of the Kroegers that has been such a challenge to Al, nor his critique

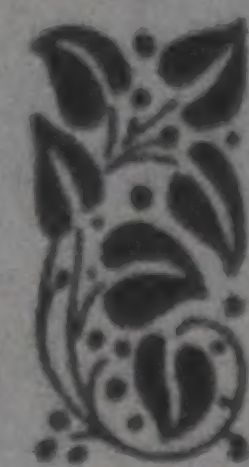
of them.

A very fine discussion of 1 Timothy 2 can be found in Thomas C. Oden, *Interpretation, a Biblical Commentary for*

Teaching and Preaching (John Knox Press, 1989). Here, careful scholarship is paired with "literary feel and cultural insight" to arrive at an interpretation that ought to bring a sparkle to the eye and a joyful

grin to the faces of believing men and women when they look at each other.

Graham E. Morbey,
Waterloo, Ont.



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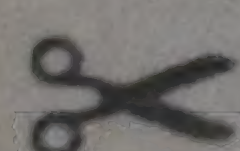
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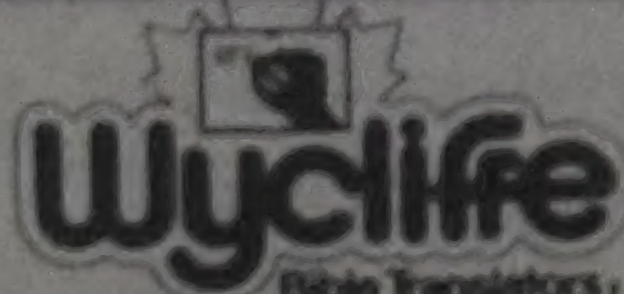
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which every language and every
culture has its own gifts ... with
which to enrich the common song
or praise.

What the church needs is not the
unity of the "melting pot," but
the unity of a choir where many
voices sing, not in unison but in
harmony, or of a garden where a
thousand different flowers bloom
in breathtaking variety.

Jamie R. Vidal

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Society

ROOFTOP MUSINGS

Now that Christmas 1992 is almost upon us, I cannot help but feel that at this time of hope and joy we deny, to our detriment, the pain and loneliness that make Christmas a commemoration of agony for others. At this time of year newspapers are replete with accounts of the increasing numbers of suicides — patients who could not be admitted to overflowing psychiatric units and who could not face the pain of another joyless Christmas. For those who are "looking in" on the sparkle of Christmas present and past, the ghost of Christmas future looms too ominously and hopelessly to give courage to live another day.

Images of Hans Christian Andersen's little Matchstick Girl flash through my mind as I reconstruct how it must feel to do no more than look in upon others' hope. She froze to death while standing on the street looking in on families' Christmas cheer.

She lit her matches one by one to create the sensation of



Looking in

warmth that she could see through the living room windows of families gathered around a festive Christmas meal. As the last match flickered she died contentedly, embraced by an angelic warmth of having to suffer cold no more. Too "heavy" for a time of cheer?

Stinging relief

Yet it is precisely at Christmas time that all the con-

trasts of anguish and joy, hope and despair, past hurts and future gains are molded sharply into a relief that stings while it soothes. It has been like that since the very first Christmas when the Christ Child was whisked to safety amidst the screams of the bereaved parents of Bethlehem infants. For a pondering Mary, the tales of these infant deaths must have moved her to hold her child that much closer to her breast, hoping to stave off the future agonies while knowing the inevitability of sorrow.

In our too frequently hyped-up, sentimentalized gloss of Christmas cheer amidst family and friends we shut out the memory and awareness of pain. Maybe it is the depressed and the suicidal who are confronting us with the genuine hope for Christmas as they cry out "No more!" while we insist that they continue in a delusion of goodness and warmth.

Shaking off the gloom

Six months after my mother died, my father insisted that our

Christmas celebration be minimized. So no tree graced our living room window and our presents consisted of needed toques and scarves knitted by our oldest sister. We tried to celebrate but could not shake off nor talk of the gloom that prevailed. I remember it as an artificially contrived celebration of cheer.

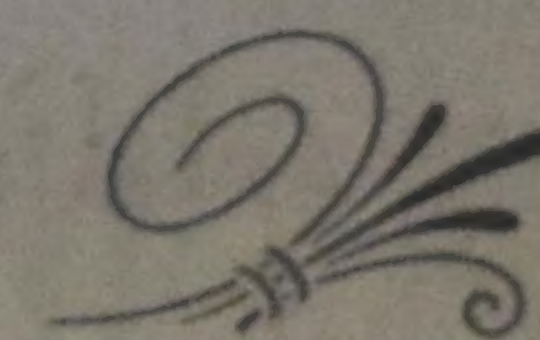
Looking back on that Christmas, we would have celebrated more hopefully if we had included Mom's empty chair in the family circle and had spoken tearfully of each other's pain, while the glow of candlelight played upon our hearts to stir the hope of being enabled to live another day.

Alyce Horzelenberg Oosterhuis is assistant professor of education and psychology at The King's College, Edmonton.

Christmas
Issue next
week

Although this 36-page promotion issue brings you special Christmas greetings, it is not our Christmas issue. Our regular subscribers will receive that next week. This week's issue, distributed to an extra 20,000 non-subscribers, features the kind of articles you would normally find in our paper.

BW



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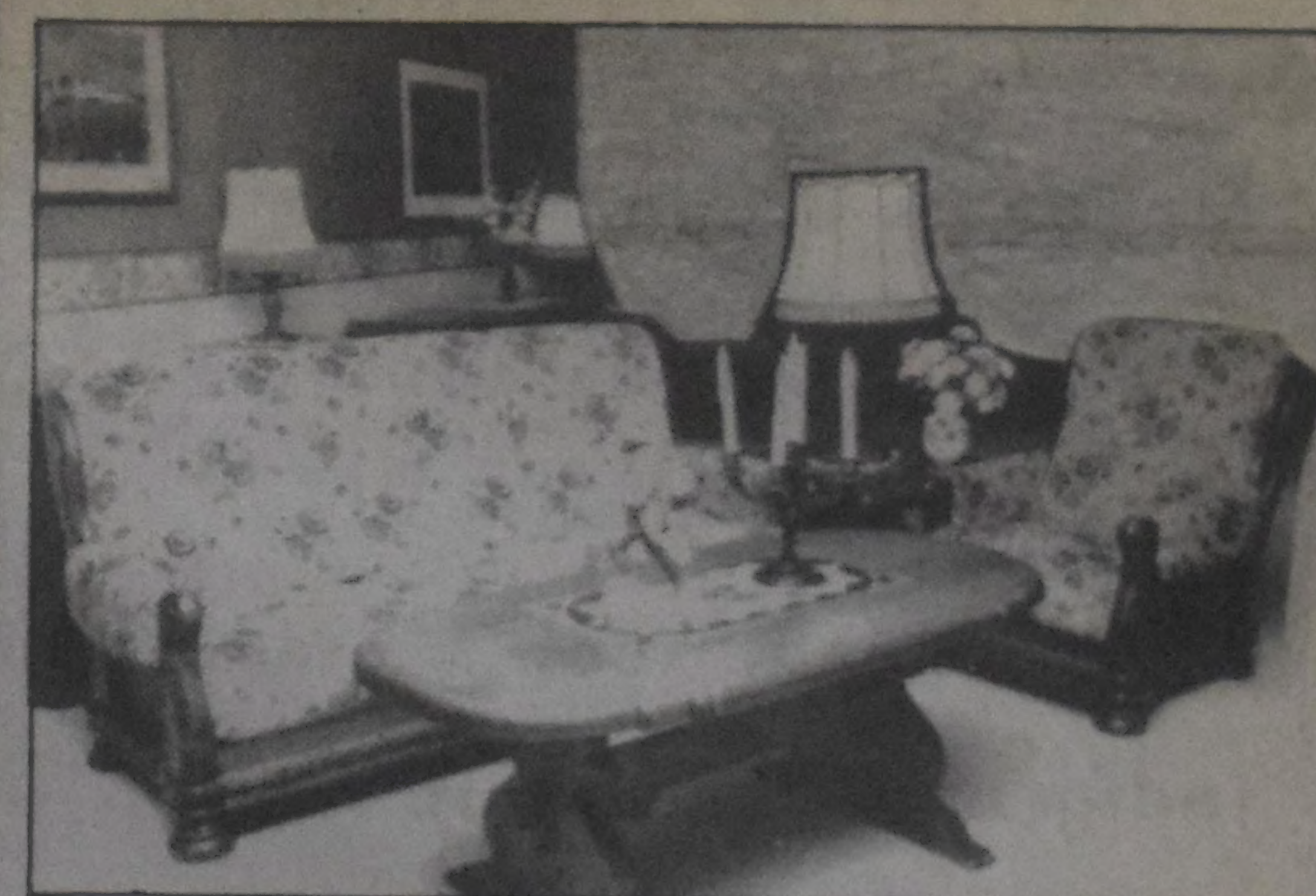
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The Christian Reformed Church has raised some outstanding authors, only a few of whom are listed on this page. Their subjects range from history to fiction to nature, but the thread that weaves them together is the authors' upbringing and membership in the CRC, where we believe that Christianity affects every facet of our lives. These unique, interesting books are ideal for gift-giving.

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Celebration

"My mouth will speak in praise of the Lord! Let every creature praise his holy name for ever and ever!" (Psalm 145:21)

Nineteenth century Welsh manufacturer Robert Owen became increasingly discouraged with conditions in England's coal mines. He personally toured the coal districts and was appalled at the degradation of human life. One evening he stopped a 12-year-old boy, coal-black, trudging off to a squalid rooming house after another day in the night below.

"Do you know God?" Owen asked him, concerned for his spiritual development.

"No," said the boy. "He must work in some other mine."

May I introduce you?

Too many people bow to the truth of that sentiment. "No, I can't say I've heard of him. He must work in some other department, or on some other floor, or in some other building, or he must live in another apartment complex." Life is consumed in the small experiences of the mines or the mills or the factories and in the tunnels one must travel through to get there.

Recently, when our congregation began a new Saturday night expression of music and drama designed to introduce people to the message of the Gospel for the first time, one young man thanked us profusely. He came only because he wanted to hear one particular young lady sing. But he wouldn't leave until he had told us that he had received so much more. He said that he had heard about "God" now and again through his teen and early adult years, but he'd never before met people who actually helped him understand the reality of things larger than the experiences he encountered from day to day.

Criss-cross to love

Some time ago cartoonist Bill Keane captured a beautiful expression of that serendipitous delight of love and passion. Panel #1 of his "Family Circle" showed little Jeffy asking his Mommy whom he would marry when he grew up. Mommies know everything, of course. But his Mommy was truthful: "Nobody knows, Jeffy, but some day your paths will cross!"

Panel #2 has little Jeffy skipping out of the front door, wondering about that other person and that other path.

The third panel has a caption at the top: "Meanwhile, hundreds of miles away." It shows a little girl coming out of her home, starting her path of life. And inside a Mrs. Wilson, with a thoughtful smile on her face, says to her husband, "Melinda just asked me who her husband would be some day...."

And Bill Keane concludes the strip with this note: "Congrats to Jeff and Melinda who were married yesterday!"

Isn't that the veiled excitement of David's song in Psalm 145? In essence it dances like a wedding song that humbly boasts of how these two paths crossed in life, mine and God's, and how when it happened, love was the only choice and joy the natural outcome.

Do you know God? Has your path crossed his yet? Just wait! When it happens, you won't be able to stop humming David's song!

Wayne Brouwer is a pastor at First Christian Reformed Church in London, Ont.

A Christian Perspective 'At Work'

In and Around the Workplace: Christian Directions in the World of Work, by Ed Vanderkloet. Mississauga, Ontario: Christian Labour Association of Canada, 1992. ISBN 0-919663-21-4. Softcover, 137 pp., \$9.95. Reviewed by Curt Gesch, Smithers, B.C.

"Hello, Curt here."

"Yes, Herr Gesch. This is your friend Peter. I have a question for you. And I don't want a long answer, or to have to read fifteen books. Just a simple answer — say, 25 words or less. The question is this: Describe a Christian perspective on literature."

If Peter weren't a fellow believer, if Peter weren't a friend, if Peter didn't clean my chimney for nothing...I'd be tempted to strangle him.

On the other hand, Peter may have a point: if this business of Christian perspective is so complicated that only incredibly long, detailed philosophical discussions can lead to any understanding...if one must read several books by VanRiessen, Dooyeweerd, Sproul, Wolterstorff or even a couple of "popular" books by Campolo in order to speak about a Christian perspective in any given area of life...well, then, I suppose the whole idea of a transformational Christian life is impractical, overly intellectual and elitist.

Now for the good news

If a friend calls on a Monday evening and asks for a brief description of a Christian perspective on work, you can now recommend just the right book. With the book *In and Around the Workplace* Ed Vanderkloet and the Christian Labour Association of Canada take the middle ground — neither too intellectual (although it comprises one whole volume), nor simplistic (it has 47 chapters).

The book contains articles published in *Calvinist Contact* and *The Guide* (the CLAC paper) over the past several

years. It contains articles on such varied subjects as "The market: neither deity nor demon," "Doing good by making a profit," "The duty to strike," "Industrial democracy," "Human rights in the Christian school," "Appreciation and remuneration in the church," "The inequity of pay equity" and "Leadership: to serve, not to be served." (The last one alone is worth the price of the book.)

As this list of chapter titles illustrates, Vanderkloet covers

schools and the church show balanced, fresh approaches to topics that need addressing, but which have long remained sacred cows in the Reformed Christian community.

Filled with appropriate anecdotes, Vanderkloet's book is easy to read while remaining meaty. And for my friend Peter, each chapter averages 2-3 pages: a short but perceptive read.

Vanderkloet's book is the work of a pragmatic visionary, one who can speak to the com-

mon man (kleine luyden) while remaining intellectually defensible.

In short, the book is a must for the ordinary Christian businessperson or working person. It should be included in all church libraries. It is a valuable resource for Christian school courses in business education, social studies and Bible classes,

it which it can function as the main text or as a supplementary resource.

In and Around the Workplace is the work of a mature Christian leader. We do ourselves no favour if we ignore it. Reading and reflecting on this book will result in insight, tolerance and a vision of how a Christian perspective is possible, practical and prerequisite...even if (sorry, Peter) the short chapters comprise slightly more than 25 words each.

IN AND AROUND
THE
WORKPLACECHRISTIAN DIRECTIONS
IN THE
WORLD OF WORK

Ed Vanderkloet

a wide range of topics, and without being humanistically dogmatic. In a column about the market, Vanderkloet shows that neither humanistic nor capitalistic economics are correct. Similarly, in the one about striking he shows that traditional conservative arguments are not necessarily Christian. And in the one about industrial democracy he reveals a refreshing honesty in admitting that the CLAC (originally) espoused an uncritical acceptance of a theory whose basis had not been adequately tested.

The chapters on Christian

The Lighthouse

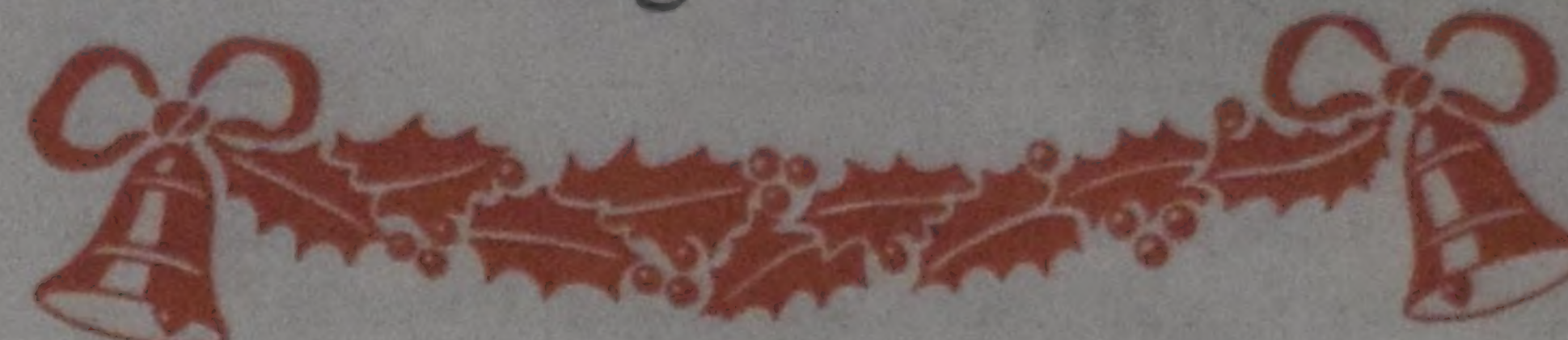
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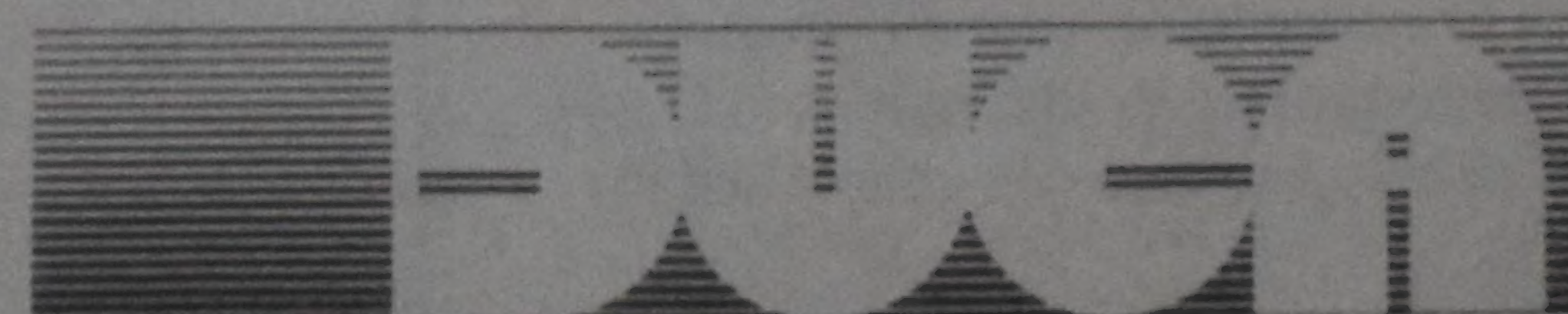


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SEASON'S GREETINGS

A Blessed Christmas Season and a Prosperous New Year



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Advice



Peter and Marja are



Dear P & M:

First of all, I want to thank you for the good service your column provides to both those who write to you for advice and to those who read your column. I have always found your answers to be based on common sense, biblical values and truths and to be offered humbly. In short, it contains the wisdom of Solomon!

I have a question concerning the (growing) use of computer "adventure" games found in the homes of Christians and non-Christians alike. There are many types of computer games, but I am speaking specifically of those involving the use of role play. Often, the games are based on the concept of "good" versus "evil" with, for example, the player taking on the role of a "good" warrior who sets out to rescue a princess, or to recover a stolen treasure. Along the way, various creatures (e.g. trolls, warlocks, etc.), try to prevent the warrior from completing his mission. The games provide weapons and spells the warrior can use in order to defeat his enemies.

Users of these games defend the role playing aspect with the argument that computer games differ from board games and that, therefore, the role playing does not become real (as compared to "Dungeons and Dragons," a controversial role playing board game which has reportedly resulted in demon possession and suicide in several cases involving teenagers). Adult users I know have also argued that they are not affected by this type of entertainment in the way a child or teenager might be.

I believe in spiritual warfare and I believe that these types of computer games are one subtle way in which Satan is getting a foothold in the homes of believers. What are your observations and opinions about role playing computer games for adults and for children?

Dear Computer Warfare:

It could be argued that computer adventure games are simply sophisticated versions of warfare

games that we've always played. Chess, for example, is an intensely absorbing game of war in which you try to outmanoeuvre your opponent with the purpose of killing knights and pawns and capturing the queen. Battleship, as another example, is about sinking and destroying enemy ships.

Since many of the characters in a computer game are cartoon-like, they often remain one-dimensional things to the players, like chess pieces and plastic battleships. When this is the case, the game is simply about challenge. It remains play, which has its place in the life of a Christian.

With your letter, however, you enclosed information about two computer games. A Genesis game called "Shining in the Darkness" promises a 3-D first-person perspective which puts the player in the adventure as he moves from battle to battle in non-stop action. Obviously the creators of this game are intent on moving beyond one-dimensional, flat characters where identification is minimal. They want you in the action; they promise complete absorption. Our immediate concern has to do with the use of time. Parents need to ask themselves if they like the way their kids become oblivious to the world around them as they get hooked on hours and hours of this kind of play. Remember, too, that most of this play involves little, if any, interaction with other people. It's just you and the computer screen.

The second game for which you provided information is "Dragon Warrior" by Nintendo. As we read the descriptions of various attack spells, we were shocked by the violent vocabulary. The game employs blazing fireballs that will severely burn the enemy and "burn even the bones of the victim." Icebolts can be thrown which cause wounds with surrounding frostbite. Players also need to watch for an inferno which becomes a tornado that sucks up enemies who will "suffer severe lacerations" all over their bodies.

We know from experience that computer games are isolating and totally absorbing. We did not know that the player would be involved in such violence. There are media watch organizations that monitor

the number of aggressive acts and situations in TV programs. By comparison, these computer games are an orgy of violence. Speaking very realistically, this means that young and adult players, locked into these visual fantasies, are mentally and emotionally locked into violent combat. And the question needs to be asked whether this will have a negative affect on their behaviour as they interact with family members and friends, and especially those whom they see as "enemies."

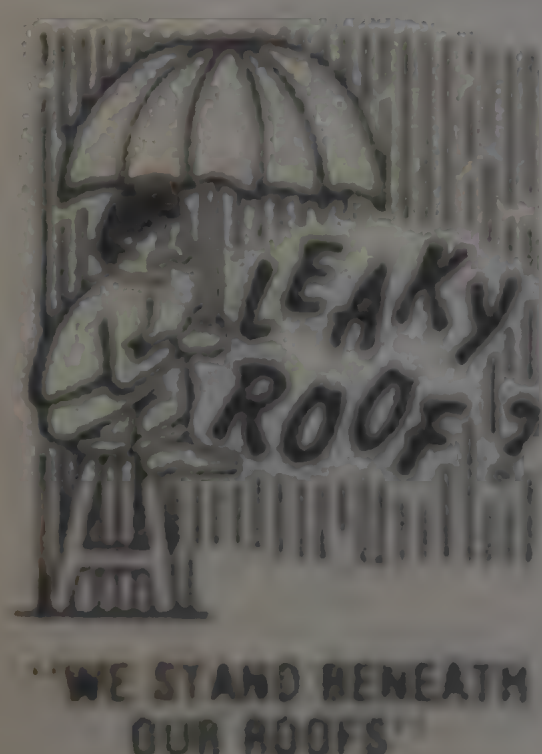
Are children learning to solve problems through violent means? Are teens learning that aggression is better than kindness and compromise when dealing with difficult people? Are Christian adults giving themselves permission to sit and think fiercely destructive and hostile thoughts despite their professed belief in the peaceful ways of Christ?

In extreme instances, the lines between reality and fantasy can become so hazy that there are recorded cases of people who actually acted out their murderous thought with little remorse. We have even heard about a neo-Nazi game where the purpose is to "exterminate" Jews! Frightening! But we prefer not to argue from extremes. Instead, let's evaluate whether our use of leisure time and our thinking processes are in harmony or in conflict with Christian spirituality:

"Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable — if anything is excellent or praiseworthy — think about such things. And the God of peace will be with you" (Phil. 4:8, 9b).

Write to: P & M
c/o Christian Courier
4-261 Martindale Road
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of Herman de Jong, Bill Ludke, Tom Zeyl, Marian Van Til and Bert Witvoet.

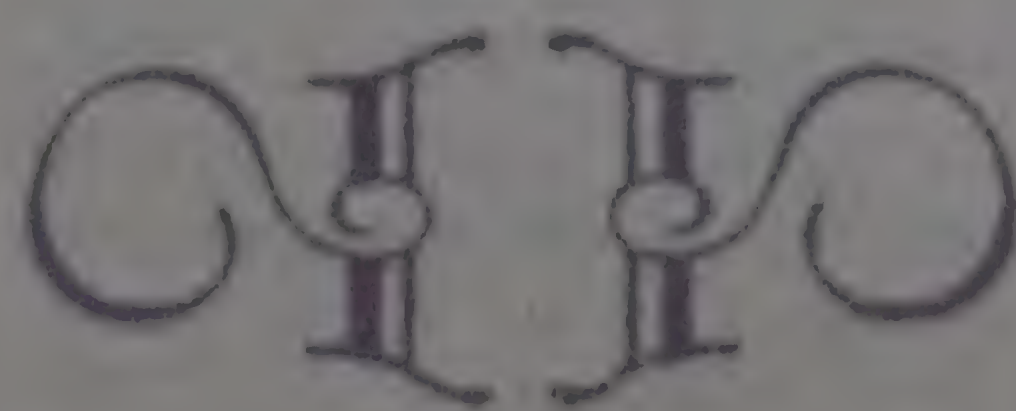


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	<p>Birthdays</p> <p>OLDEJANS: On Dec. 15, 1992, we hope to celebrate the 95th birthday of our father, grandfather and great-grandfather MEINE OLDEJANS We give praise to God for his loving kindness and great mercies in allowing Meine Oldejans a long life characterized by a strong faith and inner strength. Henk & Dini Henny & George Alice & Bert Alice & John Rose & Peter The grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Address: M. Oldejans, Holland Christian Homes, F.M. 123, 7900 McLaughlin Rd. S., Brampton, ON L6V 3N2</p>	<p>1952 December 19 1992 On Dec. 19, 1992, we hope to celebrate with our parents, JOHN and SINY PRINZEN (nee LAMMERS) their 40th wedding anniversary. We have been blessed to have shared in their lives as family, and we hope to celebrate many more years together, D.V. There will be an open house on Saturday, Dec. 19, 1992, from 2-4 p.m. at "t Ouders Huus" 2015 Headon Rd., Burlington, ON L7R 3X5 Best wishes only please. Daphne and Rick Stoffelsen Wesley Prinzen and Dawn Hatanaka</p>	<p>Help Wanted</p> <p>PROPAGATOR-GROWER: Required to be energetic, willing to learn, horticultural background, able to direct and motivate others. Job includes propagation, softwoods, hardwoods, divisions, seeds, grafting. Production of liners and seedlings. Ability to manage 82,000 sq. ft. propagation and growing on greenhouse facility. Full time employment, wages commensurate with experience and benefit package. Apply in person or send resume to Willowbrook Nurseries Inc., 1000 Balfour St., Fenwick, Ontario L0S 1C0.</p> <p>HORTICULTURAL SALES: Ambitious person needed for nursery stock sales to sell to garden centres, landscapers, and wholesalers. Must be a self starter, and willing to travel. Wages, bonuses and incentives commensurate with experience. Benefit package available and necessary training. Please send complete resume with salary history to: Willowbrook Nurseries Inc., 1000 Balfour St., Fenwick, Ontario L0S 1C0</p>	<p>Affordable Florida Vacation. Live in a completely furnished travel trailer in a cosy park, near attractions in central Florida. Available for two weeks or longer. Just bring your personal items. Starting at \$175 U.S. per week. Sunshine R.V. Rentals 922 N. Grove St. Eustis, FL 32726 (904) 589-1323</p>
	<p>Marriages</p> <p>WEVER-BOUTIN: With joy and thankfulness to the Lord, EVELYN HILDA WEVER and YVES BOUTIN along with their parents, Tony and Jean Wever, of Belleville, Ont., and Colombe Boutin of St. Pamphile, Que., announce their forthcoming marriage. This celebration will take place, the Lord willing, on Dec. 28, 1992, at 11 a.m. in the Maranatha Chr. Ref. Church, Belleville, Ont., Pastor John Visser officiating. Mailing address: Mr. Tony Wever, R.R. #6, Belleville, ON K8N 4Z6</p>	<p>Teachers</p> <p>Smithers, B.C.: Bulkley Valley Chr. School (K-12, 300 students on 2 campuses) has, for Sept. 1993, a full-time position in French 4-12. Please address enquiries/resumes to the principal, Mr. Evert Vroon, c/o B.V. Christian School, P.O. Box 3635, Smithers, BC V0J 2N0</p>	<p>Personal</p> <p>Single Christian lady, early thirties, mother of one, with country background is looking for a fun-loving, warm Christian man. Must be good with children. Looking for possible relationship and hopefully someone to share my life with. Please reply to File #2598, c/o Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1</p>	<p>Teachers</p> <p>Agassiz, B.C.: Agassiz Chr. School. The position for principal in a growing rural Christian school of 106 enrolment is open, starting the 1993/94 school year. Applicants must be committed Christians with goal setting and vision skills. Administrative duties will be 40 percent; and classroom duties 60 percent. Closing date for the position is Jan. 31, 1993. Forward all applications to: Agassiz Christian School, Box 3230, Agassiz, BC V0M 1A0 Attn.: Education Committee</p> <p>Rexdale, Ont.: Timothy Chr. School invites applications for a temporary full-time teaching position for Grades 2 and 3, to fill a maternity leave beginning March 22, 1993. Send letter of application, resume and references to: George Guichelaar Timothy Chr. School 28 Elmhurst Dr. Rexdale, ON M9W 2J5 Phone: (416) 741-5770</p>
<p>Christmas Greetings</p> <p>PASMA: A blessed Christmas and a happy New Year to all friends and relatives. May God bless all of us in the coming year. Alice Pasma, R.R. #1, Springfield, Ont.</p>				

Teachers

DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

The **Calgary Christian School**, a school providing education from a Christian point of view to 500+ students in Kindergarten to Grade 12, is looking for a **Development Director** to work full-time to promote the development of the school resulting in growth of the student body and in financial resources.

This new position will require a person committed to Christian day school education, with experience and proven results in public relations and marketing. The successful candidate will have excellent oral and written communication skills together with interpersonal effectiveness and a proactive style. Preferably, he or she will possess post-secondary education. Financial and/or fund raising skills would be an asset. As a team player, this person will have demonstrated creativity and a positive optimistic disposition.

Please send resumes to:
Paul Verhoeff
Development Director Recruitment Committee
Calgary Christian School
2839 - 49 Street SW
Calgary, AB
T3E 3X9

Timothy Christian School
has a definite

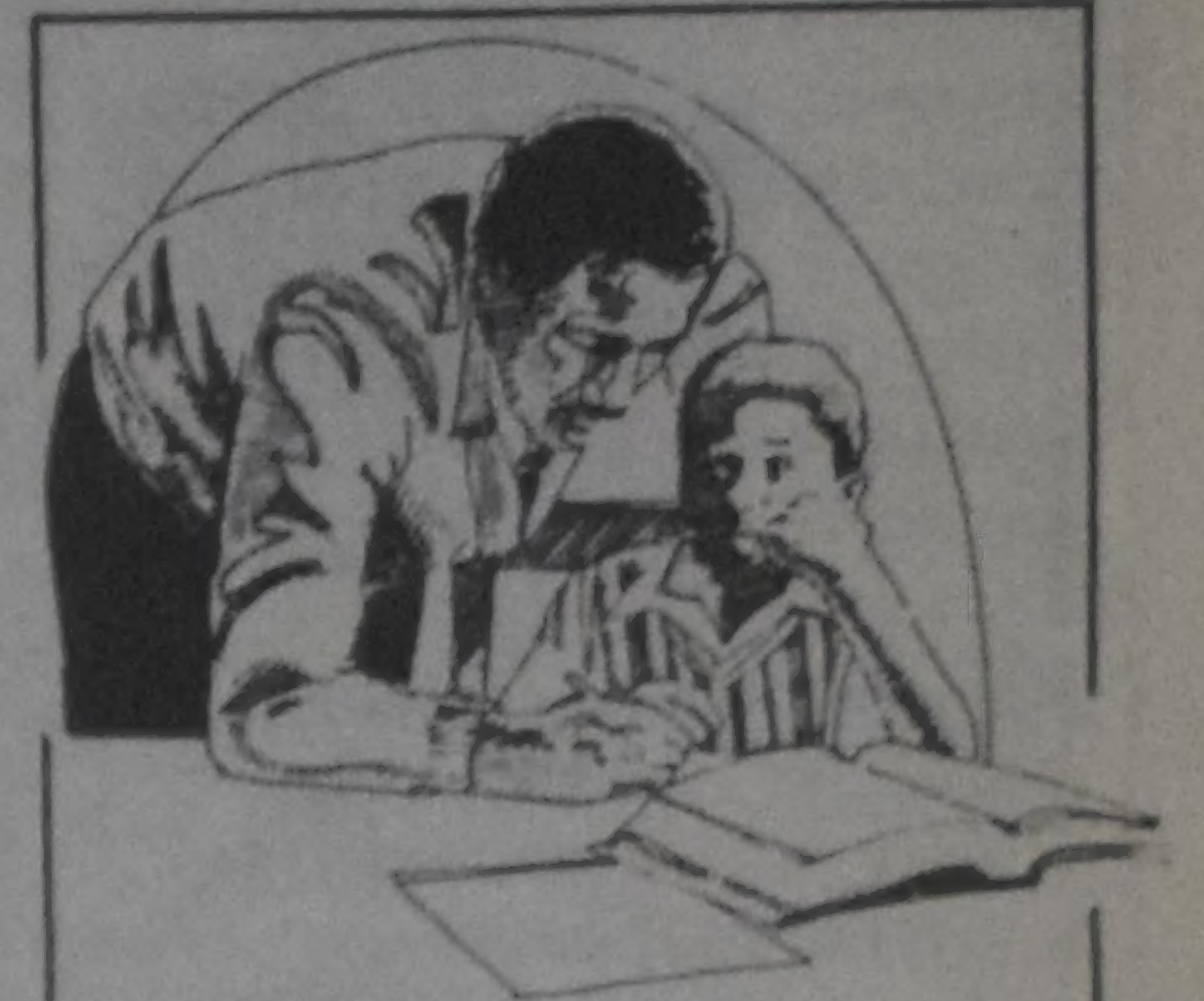
Principal

opening for the 1993-94 school year.

Our school of 130 students and nine staff was established in 1958 and is situated in a northwest suburb of Metropolitan Toronto known as Rexdale. If you are interested in leading a dedicated staff and being supported by a committed Christian school community, we invite you to apply for this position. We look forward to assisting you to use your talents and gifts in our school to help prepare God's children for service in His kingdom. Please send resumes or direct enquiries to:

William Groot (416-743-2554 — evenings)
Principal Search Committee
Timothy Christian School
28 Elmhurst Drive
Rexdale ON M9W 2J5

Miscellaneous



Check out
our classifieds
for possible
teaching positions.

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Events

Georgetown Choral Society presents
Handel's "Messiah"

Leslie Jost (soprano), Susan Cooper (alto), Emilio Fina (tenor),
Ross Doddington (bass), the Etobicoke Symphony, A. Dale Wood
(director)

Dec. 11, 1992 at 8 p.m.
Holland Christian Homes BRAMPTON

Dec. 12, 1992 at 8 p.m.
St. Elizabeth R.C. Church NEWMARKET

Dec. 18, 1992 at 8 p.m.
Holy Cross R.C. Church GEORGETOWN

Dec. 19, 1992 at 8 p.m.
Redeemer College (benefit) ANCASTER

Tickets: \$15; Seniors/Students \$12 available from Allstate
Insurance (sponsor) 1-800-387-9974

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Events

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BC V2T 4W1
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Toll Free: 522-0919 Fax: 853-1839
Res: 854-1560

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SHALOM MANOR NURSING HOME

Classis Hamilton and Niagara of the Christian Reformed Church

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in the Mountainview Christian Reformed Church
Regional Road 81 at Bartlett Avenue, Grimsby, Ontario

"This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes" (Ps. 118: 23)

Church news

Christian Reformed Church

Calls received

—to Clarkson CRC, Mississauga, Ont., Rev. John A. Ooms of First CRC, Richmond, B.C.

Available for call

The council of Calvin CRC, Ottawa, announces that Rev. Adrian Helleman, having recently completed his doctoral studies, is now available for a call to serve a congregation. He is a former missionary to the Philippines. The Calvin council heartily recommends him. Rev. Helleman can be contacted at: 132 Mortimer St., Toronto, ON, M4K 2A4; (416) 423-2074.

New clerk

First CRC, Sarnia, Ont.: John Visser, 1105 Exmouth St., Sarnia, ON, N7S 1W5; (519) 344-8300.

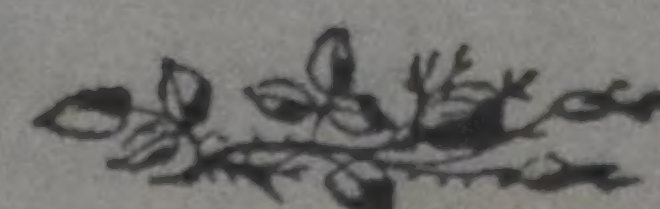
Seeking a pastor

The Essex, Ont., Chr. Ref. Church is seeking a pastor. We are a congregation of 87 families within a rural community in Southern Ontario. For our church profile or further information contact:

Search Committee

Essex Chr. Ref. Church, c/o Henry Mulder
240 Irwin Ave., Essex, ON N8M 2T6
or call (519) 776-5161

← Help Wanted



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Sid Vandermeulen

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Season's Greetings

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volunteers, nurses, staff and doctors,
Ministers, deacons, elders and investors,
directors, officials, testators and
bequestors.

May the peace of Christmas be in your heart this
season and throughout the New Year.

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Brampton, Ontario L6Y 3N2

Schiedel
CONSTRUCTION INCORPORATED

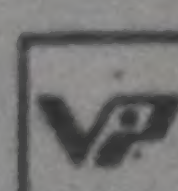
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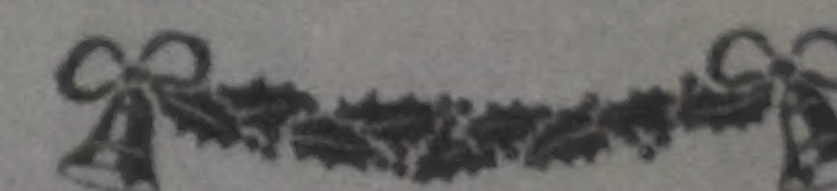
Albert J. Bakker, B.A., LL.B., O.C.
Charles R. Taylor, B.A., LL.B.

Roy W. Atamanuk, B.A., LL.B.
Peter B. Wenglowksi, B.A., LL.B.

Canada Trust House, Second Floor, 60 James Street
St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 7J8, P.O. Box 1328
Area Code 416 — 688-1520

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The Executive and Staff of
CFFO wish all members and
friends a joy-filled Christmas
and God's care for the New Year.

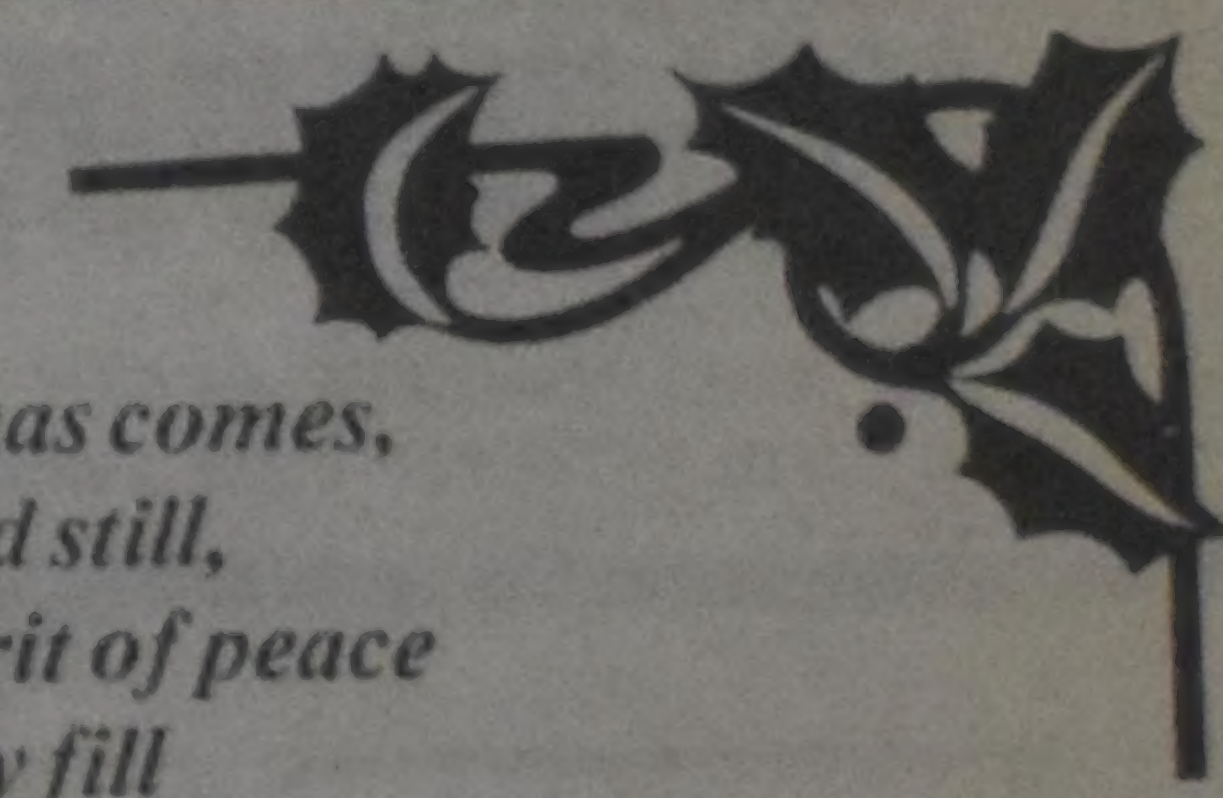
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115 Woolwich Street
Guelph, ON N1H 3V1
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Season's Greetings

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Kitchener, Ontario N2H 6M6 Phone (519) 579-2920
Fax (519) 576-0471

As Christmas comes,
soft and still,
May the spirit of peace
gently fill
Your heart and home
with love and goodwill.



Gary van Eyk CMA

Certified Management Accountant

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greetings at this blessed Christmas season.

Rudy and Velva De Vries
HOUSE CO-ORDINATORS
(416) 529-0454

Classifieds/Events

Help Wanted

PASTOR NEEDED

The **Neerlandia Chr. Ref. Church** is seeking a pastor. We are a congregation of 110 families within a rural community in North-central Alberta. For our church profile or further information contact:

Search Committee
Neerlandia Chr. Ref. Church, c/o Brenda Strydhorst
Box 4, Neerlandia, AB T0G 1R0
or call (403) 674-5868

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Teachers

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PRINCIPAL

starting the 1993/94 school year. Clinton is located approximately 75 km. north of London, 18 km. east of the sandy Lake Huron beaches and only a short 45-minute drive from the famous Stratford Festival.

Our ten-room school with full-size gymnasium, has 218 students at the moment with a staff of nine full-time and two part-time teachers.

If you are interested, please send your application with complete resume to the Search Committee

c/o Mr. Ralph Schuurman, Principal
P.O. Box 658,
Clinton, ON N0M 1L0
Tel.: (519) 482-7851

Miscellaneous

Is someone waiting for you?

More job openings are available than RBC graduates can fill. There are people waiting for you. If you have a heart for ministry, there are mission agencies and churches looking for qualified candidates. We can help you prepare.

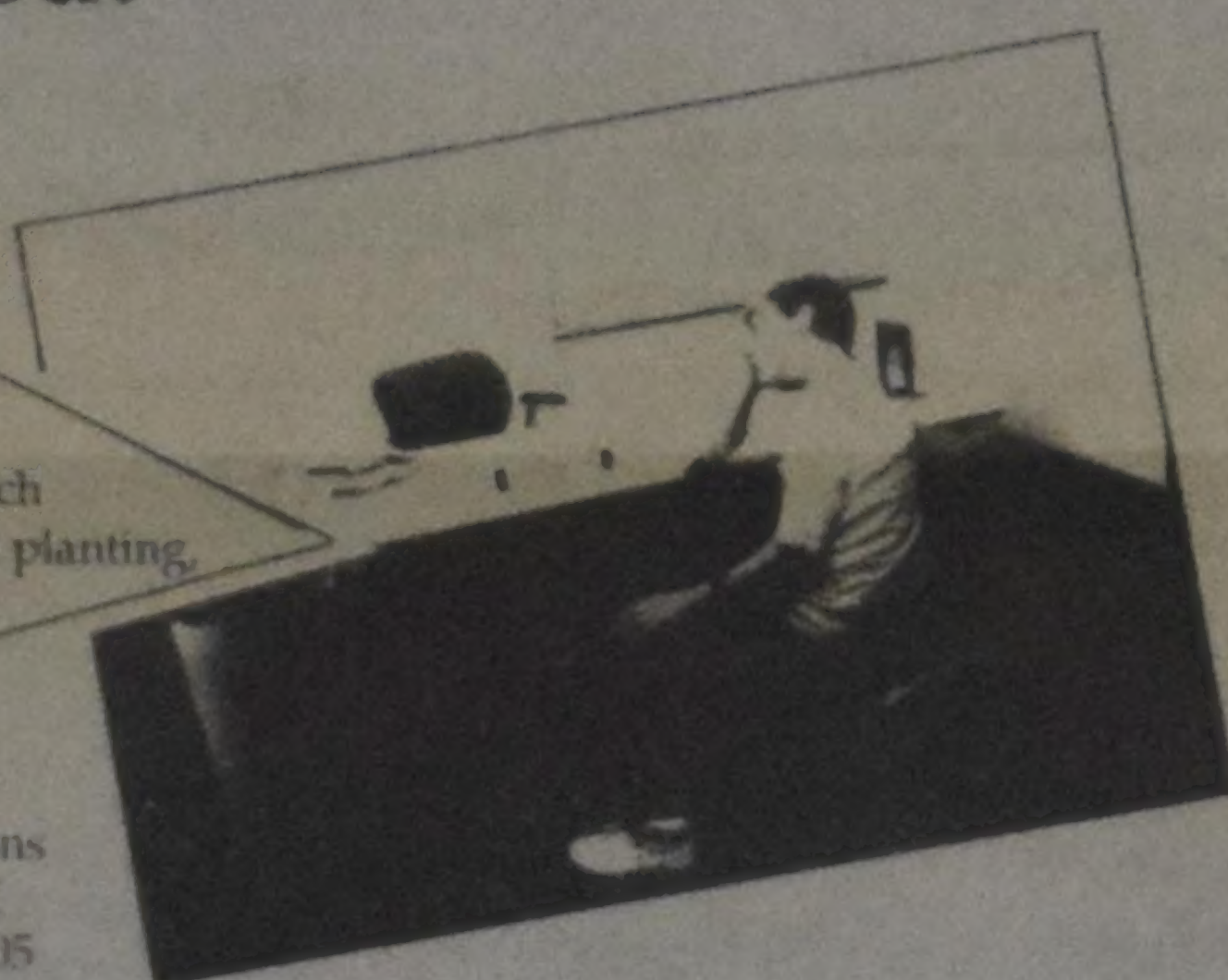
Answer the call.

RBC graduates with the Bachelor of Religious Education degree are involved in church education, evangelism and church planting, overseas missions, social service, seminary, urban ministries, youth ministry.

Contact RBC Admissions
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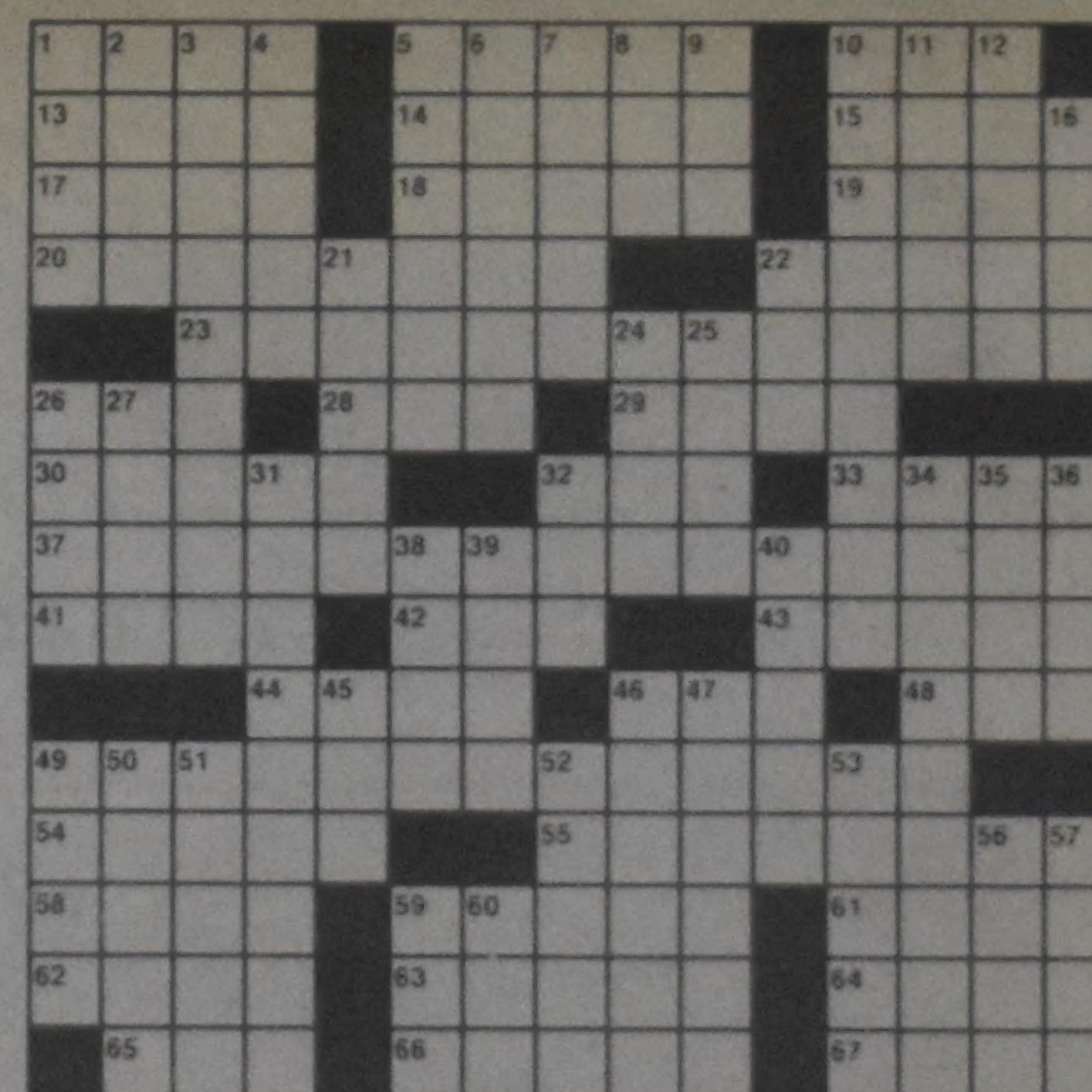
WEEKLY PUZZLE

by Stanley B. Whitten

ACROSS
 1 Poses for a portrait
 5 Corpulent
 10 Intuitive letters
 13 Tiny opening
 14 — myrtle (shrub)
 15 Negatives
 17 Filled with wonder
 18 Sum
 19 Thunder sound
 20 Person with another's moniker
 22 Tantara
 23 Novel by Aldous Huxley
 26 Buddy
 28 Coop resident
 29 "Now hear —!"
 30 Excuse
 32 Expert
 33 — Bator
 37 Sinatra-Walker film

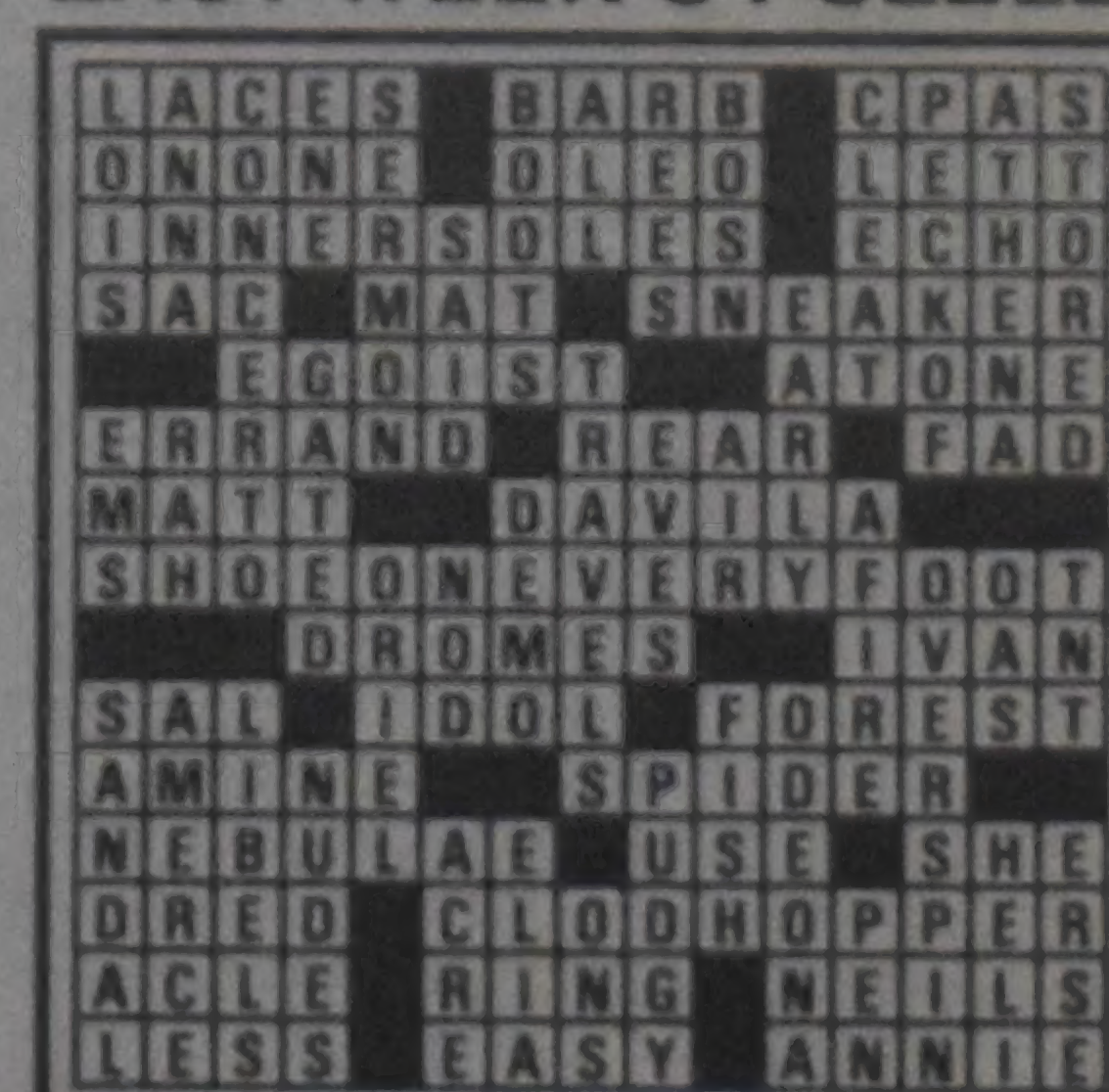
41 Breakfast dish
 42 Macadamia, e.g.
 43 Replenish
 44 Suffering
 46 — pro nobis
 48 AMA members: abbr.
 49 World Series runner-up (1991)
 54 Give
 55 Compelled observance of
 58 Boxing milieu
 59 Slapping sound
 61 Talk wildly
 62 Cain's victim
 63 Playing marble
 64 Candid
 65 Vane dir.
 66 Check maker
 67 Let

DOWN
 1 Nine inches
 2 Hawkeye State
 3 Aquiver
 4 Passover feast
 5 Musical interval
 6 Splintered



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LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE



45 Formicary resident
 46 Showy
 47 Roof beam
 49 Taj Mahal site
 50 Communal group
 51 Country roads
 52 Secure, aboard ship
 53 Goof
 56 Level
 57 Fender mishap
 59 Blackjack
 60 Couples' org.

Calendar

Dec. 4 Christmas concert by the RC Concert Choir & Chamber Orchestra (directed by Christiaan Teeuwse with Carolyn Stronks on flute), 8 p.m., Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont. Info: (416) 648-2131.

Dec. 5 Organ concert by Martin Mans, virtuoso organist from the Netherlands, at 8 p.m., Second CRC, Brampton, Ont. Info: (416) 455-0797.

Dec. 5 Christmas sing-a-long, 7:30 p.m., CRC, Strathroy, Ont. With the combined St. Thomas Ladies' Choir, Male Choir and Strathroy Mixed Choir.

Dec. 6 "Nederlandse Kerstzangdienst," 7:30 p.m., Emmanuel Ref. Church, 170 Clarke St. N., Woodstock, Ont. Will be repeated on Dec. 13, same time. Info: (519) 537-6422.

Dec. 11 Advent celebration with the "Adoramus-Maranatha Choir" (Dir. John Hunse), at 8 p.m., CRC, Fruitland, Ont.

Dec. 11 Handel's "Messiah" presented by the Georgetown Choral Society, 8 p.m., Holland Chr. Homes, Brampton, Ont. Info: 1-800-387-9974.

Dec. 12 Official opening of Shalom Manor Nursing Home, 1:30 p.m., Mountainview CRC, Grimsby, Ont.

Dec. 12 Handel's "Messiah" presented by the Georgetown Choral Society, 8 p.m., Elizabeth Seton Roman Catholic Church, Newmarket, Ont. Info: 1-800-387-9974.

Dec. 12 Christmas choir and organ concert, with guest organist Andre Knevel, at 7:30 p.m., Centennial United Church, 858 Dundas St., London, Ont.

Dec. 12 "An English Christmas" presented by the Listowel Concert Singers with brassroots and organ. At 8 p.m., Trinity United Church, Listowel, Ont.

Dec. 13 Dutch worship service led by Rev. J. Kuntz, 3 p.m., CRC, Ancaster, Ont.

Dec. 13 Handel's "Messiah" presented by "The Laudate Dominum Choir" (director Barbara Mavin) and organist Dick DeJonge. At 8 p.m., St. Paul's Congregational Church, Chatham, Ont.

Dec. 18 Handel's "Messiah" presented by the Georgetown Choral Society, 8 p.m., Holy Cross Roman Catholic Church, Georgetown, Ont. Info: 1-800-387-9974.

Dec. 18 - 21 Annual candlelight services of the "Adoramus-Maranatha Choir" (dir. John Hunse). Dec. 18: 8 p.m., Mount Hamilton CRC, Hamilton, Ont. Dec. 21: 7:30 p.m., CRC, York, Ont.

Dec. 19 Christmas sing-a-long, 7:30 p.m., Central United Church, St. Thomas, Ont. With the (combined) St. Thomas Ladies' Choir, Male Choir and Strathroy Mixed Choir.

Dec. 19 The Georgetown Choral Society performs Handel's "Messiah" at a benefit concert for Redeemer College. At 8 p.m., Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont. Info: 1-800-387-9974.

Education

Quebec exchange program brings *amitié* to Edmonton

Photo courtesy Louisa Bruinsma

Exchange students from Québec arrive at Edmonton airport and pose with their Western "twins."

Louisa Bruinsma

EDMONTON — The emotional farewells at the Edmonton International Airport at midnight on Friday, October 30, were not unlike those of close relatives who realized it would be a very long time before they would meet again, if ever.

But these were not relatives saying their final goodbyes — they were high school and college students participating in the Voyageur Canada '92 exchange program. Before the program they had never met the students they were now so emotional about leaving.

To celebrate Canada's 125th birthday, 125 students from each riding across

Canada were selected to participate in a youth travel exchange program.

The program was sponsored by members of Parliament, Air Canada, community volunteers and the Society for Educational Visits and Exchanges in Canada.

Because six Edmonton ridings were matched with ridings in Québec, the program had considerable appeal for the students of Edmonton Christian High School (ECHS), especially those who had an interest in improving their French-language skills.

For ECHS French teacher Marian Williams the Voyageur program provided an opportunity to continue to

provide the benefits of the French exchange program (for which funding is no longer available). She strongly encouraged her students to apply, and also served as supervisor for one of the groups. Over 25 ECHS students and 1992 alumni were selected to participate in various groups in the program.

Host families were required to assist in transportation to local tourist attractions, and they subsidized some of the entertainment costs.

Shared differences

"The visits to Québec helped to dispel cultural stereotypes and myths," said Williams. Students experienced that culture is not a static thing.

"The differences are not just in language," said Jessica Boonstra, one of four Edmonton students twinned with students from the Rivière-du-Loup area of Québec. "Some of the differences are between a rural and urban living situation."

"The students experienced how language works," says Williams. "They discovered that language is real communication and that the skills they acquired are useful. They developed an immediate functional vocabulary."

Ann Bruinsma, who also travelled to Rivière-du-Loup, sprinkled the French words *aussi, et* and *c'est* throughout her speech when she recounted her Québec experiences back home. "I learned so much French!" she said. "And all the

things we learned about Québec and Québécois customs were true."

Willingness to be open

The two groups of students quickly established close ties with each other.

"It was easy to get to know them," said Angela VandenBoogaard, another Edmonton student. "We immediately became a close-knit group. Everybody was open and willing to set aside differences to get to know each other. We were able to set aside our language barriers."

VandenBoogaard's Rivière-du-Loup exchange partner was in Edmonton at the date of the October 30 referendum. "My twin and I were both in favour of the Yes vote," says VandenBoogaard, "and we both felt bad when we watched the results come in."

In a time of political uncertainty about Canada's future, the Voyageur program helped 37,000 participants realize the wealth that can be experienced in a nation made up of a rich tapestry of cultures.

"In the end," says VandenBoogaard, "it was hard to see our new friends go back home."

Edmonton student Danielle Barthel agrees. Immediately after bidding farewell to her twin from the town of St. Pascal, she announced, "I'm going to move to Québec — tomorrow."

What is this paper called *Christian Courier*?

Bert Witvoet

Christian Courier, formerly *Calvinist Contact*, is a Reformed weekly which was founded in 1945. It is owned by seven Reformed business people in the Niagara region. They have entrusted the editorial direction of the paper to an editor-in-chief and to a staff and editorial board that advise the editor. The business part of the corporation, known as Calvinist Contact Publishing, is run by a general manager, who is accountable to the board of owners.

Christian Courier is further aided by a cluster of writers, columnists and correspondents living throughout Canada and the U.S. The paper is independent of church, school or organization and depends for its revenue solely on subscribers and advertisers.

Our mission statement is captured in the masthead on the editorial page of every issue: "We are an independent weekly that seeks the truth, care and rule of Jesus Christ." To further elaborate on our journalistic mission, we have adopted six objectives which represent our continuing philosophy:

Objective 1: "Develop a Christian Mind"

Nurture and challenge the Christian community by publishing articles that help shape a Christian mind and identify

un-Christian and unhelpful ways of thinking.

Objective 2: "Promote Public Justice"

Help readers assume responsibility for the welfare of society by encouraging the renewal of public life, speaking up against injustice and exposing the myth of neutrality in the public sphere.

Objective 3: "Encourage Communities of Mercy"

Include stories of pain and healing which encourage readers to acknow-

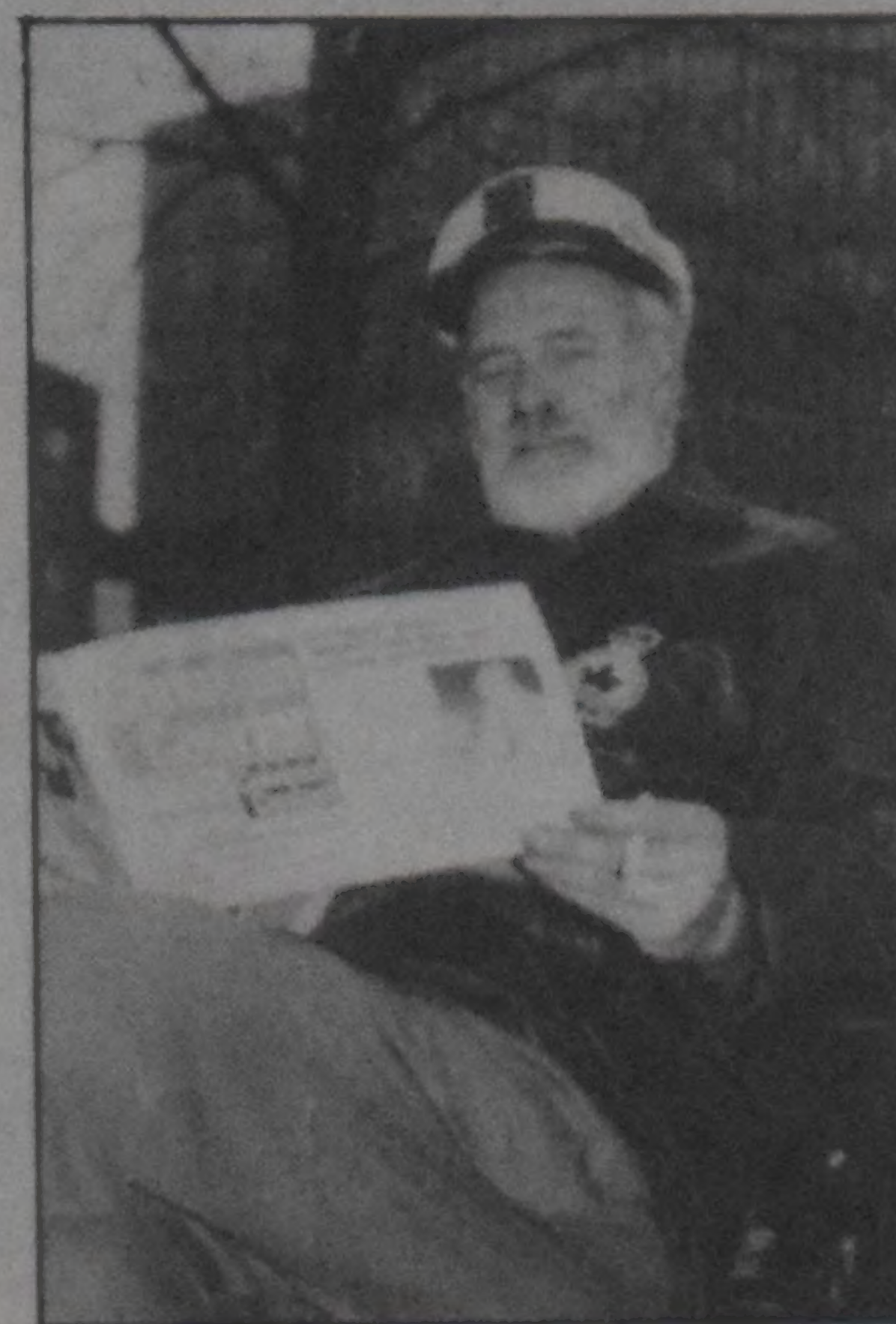


Photo: Bert Witvoet

St. Catharines resident Ross Harrison takes a curious look at the Nov. 6 issue of *Christian Courier*.

ledge their own brokenness and to declare solidarity with those who are suffering.

Objective 4: "Celebrate the Work of the Spirit"

Keep the readership informed about the work of the church and about developments in the Christian community and the world which affect the spread of the Gospel.

Objective 5: "Practise Honest Journalism"

Commit ourselves to thorough, accurate and fair reporting about things that *make* a difference rather than about things that *are* different.

Objective 6: "Affirm Our Cultural Task"

Publish articles that show appreciation for the positive unfolding of God's creation and for the gifts of people in various cultural endeavours — work and play, arts and science.